

# TO ARREST BOGUS BABY'S "MOTHER."

Police Seek Mrs. Martin on Nurse's Confession that Child Was Procured to Palm Off on Dr. Martin as His Own.

COUPLE WERE ESTRANGED.

She Believed Husband Would Return to Her if Convinced that Heir to His Scottish Estates Were Born to Him.

Dr. John McLeod Martin, of Boston, had Lydia Mueller, a nurse, formerly employed by Mrs. Lena Rickert, a midwife at No. 123 East Forty-fifth street, to make affidavits concerning the attempt of Mrs. Elizabeth Starr Keefe Martin to foist a bogus baby upon her husband.

Lydia Mueller, the nurse, had already made an oral confession to the District Attorney covering the alleged conspiracy between herself, Mrs. Rickert and Mrs. Martin to make it appear that Mrs. Martin gave birth to a child at Mrs. Rickert's sanitarium.

Dr. Martin brought suit to have the birth certificate on file with the Board of Health annulled. At this proceeding the nurse supported the testimony of Mrs. Martin and Mrs. Rickert. She was very nervous when she reached the District Attorney's office to-day.

"I confessed," she said, "because I had done wrong and wanted to do the right thing. I got the baby from a friend of mine, a woman who lived at No. 123 East Forty-fifth street, and we arranged to call Dr. Spier in just after the child had apparently been born. Mrs. Martin thought a doctor's birth certificate would be more valuable than a midwife's certificate. But Dr. Spier did not have such a baby at that time and was not present at the birth."

Wonderful Woman Says Dr. Martin Dr. Martin is greatly affected over the turn of affairs. He said:

"My wife is a wonderful woman. She has an abnormally developed brain. She was possessed with the idea of having a baby, but I knew that was impossible, and I knew, of course, she was up to some scheme when she wrote me some months after we had separated that she had given birth to a child. She wanted the baby in order to be able to claim a share to an estate in the Isle of Skye, which I have recently fallen heir to."

Detectives from the District Attorney's office who have been searching for Mrs. Martin for several days say she has fled from the city. They traced her to No. 204 West One Hundred and Nineteenth street, which was the last place she lived in Manhattan. She left there several weeks ago, and is now said to be in Newark.

The bogus baby is in the keeping of a Mrs. Bartly, of Jamaica, L. I.

So far the only confession directed against Mrs. Lena Rickert, a midwife who provided the bogus baby and at whose sanitarium Mrs. Martin alleged she gave birth to the child, Mrs. Rickert is charged with conspiracy in filing a false birth certificate.

Magistrate Pool to-day sent a police surgeon to examine her. If she is

# MRS. MARTIN AND THE BABY SHE TRIED TO PASS AS HER OWN, AND OTHER CHARACTERS IN CASE.



only shamming illness, as the District Attorney suspects, she will be taken from bed and brought to court. If her sickness is genuine a policeman will be placed on guard over her.

How the Confession Was Secured.

The confession of the nurse was brought about by Champ Andrews, attorney for Dr. Martin, who succeeded in getting from Mrs. Bartly, of Jamaica, two letters of Mrs. Martin's which the latter had asked her to burn. While Mrs. Martin did not commit herself in the letters she exhibited more concern over the legal aspect of the case than for the baby's welfare.

As a result of their depositions Assistant District Attorney Studin said he would apply to-day in the West Side Court for warrants for the arrest of Mrs. Martin and Mrs. Rickert. In her affidavit to-day Lydia Mueller declared that Mrs. Martin visited her last Friday and begged her not to confess, as she heard she was prepared to do. She claims that Mrs. Martin offered to provide her the means to go West and keep out of the way of the District Attorney's detectives.

These letters were brought to the attention of the District Attorney and he placed detectives on the trail of the nurse, Lydia Mueller. She finally broke down and confessed that she had been employed in Mrs. Rickert's sanitarium for some years. She remembered that Mrs. Martin came to the sanitarium in June, 1902, and wanted a baby for adoption. Mrs. Martin was very particular in describing the color of the eyes, hair and other things she would like the baby to have. Mrs. Rickert did not have such a baby at that time and Mrs. Martin suggested that she come and live at the sanitarium so that it might appear as if the child was really born to her.

Found a Suitable Baby.

The nurse said she went to a house in East Forty-sixth street, where she found a baby which answered the requirements of Mrs. Martin. The baby suited, and the mother was paid \$25 to give up all claim. Mrs. Martin, however, did not return for the baby, and it was finally adopted by Mrs. Katrina Liebert, of No. 343 East Seventeenth street.

Mrs. Liebert feared that the child might be taken from her, and Mrs. Rickert filed a certificate falsely stating that the baby had been born to Karl and Katrina M. Liebert at their home.

Mrs. Martin turned up later and another baby was procured for her. Mrs. Martin at once went to bed. Dr. O. H. Spier was called. He made a casual examination and called once or twice.

Finally Mrs. Rickert filed a certificate giving the date of the birth of the child as June 21, 1902. Nurse Mueller said she had nothing to do with sending word to Dr. Martin. Her part was to corroborate Mrs. Martin.

Confession Was Corroborated.

As soon as the nurse had confessed thorough investigation was made by Dr. William H. Guilford, of the Board of Health, and the statements of the nurse were fully corroborated. Dr. Guilford went before Magistrate Pool yesterday afternoon and secured a warrant for the arrest of Mrs. Rickert. The case of Mrs. Martin was laid before District Attorney Jerome and Detective Sergt. McNaught was detailed to arrest her. Mrs. Martin is forty years old, she met Dr. Martin in 1888, but did not marry him until 1892. After living together for three years, the doctor separated. Mrs. Martin is of English and Scottish parentage. She has earned a reputation on education, as an organizer for the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and as a newspaper correspondent in Washington. "I believe," said Assistant District Attorney Studin to-day, "that the mother of the bogus baby is the wife of Dr. Martin. She probably thought that the baby would reconcile them."

The two had been separated for some time. As for the money that he might get from property on the Isle of Skye, I do not think it was sufficient to be the basis of the plot."

Safe Burglars in Hightstown.

HIGHTSTOWN, N. J., March 4.—Burglars broke into the jewelry store of Joseph Garvey, in this place, last night and blew open the safe. More than \$500 worth of jewelry was stolen.

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Mrs. Rickert.

Alexina Elizabeth Starr Martin.

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Specialists were employed by both sides to testify as to the condition of the child's eyes and the cause to which it was due. Mrs. Murphy, who was injured at the same time, was called by the railroad company. She testified for the plaintiff.

The girl was suffering from a severe case of atrophy of the eye. It was shown that the child never had received an injury to her head except the one involved in the suit.

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